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## On the Right Choice of Books for Children

THE season of juvenile books is upon us and the mothers and aunts of Christendom are once more face to face with the task of deciding what the children like. "Fairy tales!" they cry hopefully, reading the title on one or other of the pink, green or purple volumes pressed upon them. "Surely that will do. All children like fairy tales." But do they? Personally I divide children into two classes, one loving and the other detesting them, and to the non-recognition of this clear distinction we owe that distressing hybrid, the "comic" fairy story. "Children like fun," says the hasty generaliser, "and everyone knows they like fairy tales. Let me, therefore, write a funny fairy tale." This he proceeds to do, urging on the clown with wild shouts and brandishing the sausages, while the transformation scene—and every fairy tale worthy the name is a transformation scene—clumsily managed at best, fades into insignificance before the cries of "Here we are again!" My contention is that not only do certain children find this clown-and-sausage treatment of the fairy world the abomination of desolation, but that even by the more practical-minded it is at best merely tolerated. It is a compromise, and matter-of-fact children infinitely prefer frankly realistic fiction.

The devotee of fairy tales is quick to feel the mystic atmosphere:—

"For Kilmeny had been, she kened not where,  
And Kilmeny had seen what she could not declare.  
Kilmeny had been where the cock never crew,  
Where the rain never fell, and the wind never blew."

How significant too, that on returning to the world of every day "no smile was seen on Kilmeny's face." She had been to the *real* land of *faërie*, that Land of Heart's Desire which must be dear and familiar to anyone who would guide the children thither.

And of all the writers who know that "dim green, well-beloved isle," with the exception, perhaps of Hans Andersen, it is still George MacDonald I would choose as guide if I were once more a child. He should take me there "At the Back of the North Wind," and once more I should know that mystic lady of the streaming hair and starry eyes, and in "The Princess and the Goblin" I should meet again the old-young "grandmother" with her fire of roses and her silver bath, in whose depths, for me, the stars are still shining. For George MacDonald, like every other true teller of fairy tales, takes his fairyland seriously. Not that taking it seriously means of necessity an absence of gaiety. Some of the best stories I know combine beauty and mystery, with a charming playfulness which never jars even upon the most serious-minded reader. Their writer, long since dead, took her book to publishers in vain, and her non-success is only to be explained by the false idea which prevails of what children really like. It depends upon the children. For the devotee of fairy tales you must go the whole fairy; for the practical child you need not write fairy tales at all.

But there is "Alice in Wonderland" someone exclaims triumphantly. "There you have joking—the best imaginable joking—there the atmosphere is anything but mystic, yet all children love 'Alice.'" Precisely. But then "Alice" is not a fairy tale at all. It is an extremely realistic story. Wonderland is not Fairyland, as Lewis Carroll well knew. There are mad hatters, delightful dormice, immortal Cheshire cats in "Wonderland," but never a fairy, or except for the moment when Alice emerges from the rabbit-hole passage into the garden of roses is there a single passage of "*faërie*" charm in the whole book. I yield to none in my admiration of the inimitable "Alice," and sorrowfully regret that others have not taken the adjective literally. For to the influence of this masterpiece, falsely considered a fairy tale, we owe almost all the third-rate "funny" fairy stories of the past thirty years. And for the other children—the children who are bored by the magic country and find the real world good enough? Well, theirs is no hard case. It is not the domestic story which has fallen upon evil days. Mr. E. V. Lucas, indeed, has gone so far as to provide a special and very delightful series for the matter-of-fact child, and one at least of the stories contained in his "Little Blue Books" ("The Castaways of Meadow Bank") is as good a piece of realistic fiction as one would wish to find in or out of a child's book; while, of the innumerable school stories, Evelyn Sharp's "Youngest Girl in the School" always strikes me as a charming example. It is here, of course, that the devotee of fairy tales is to be envied, for delight in the magic country does not exclude interest in the "Land of Every Day," and the "fairy-tale child" enters both worlds with equal if with different pleasure.

With regard to the vexed question of the sort of illustrations which please children, my views are again heterodox. All children, one hears, "like bright colours, and are confused by detail in a picture." I do not agree. That baby children love violent reds and yellows is doubtless true, but my experience tends to show that directly a child is old enough to understand a story at all, it prefers an elaborate black and white drawing in which it gradually discovers a fresh flower on the Princess's robe; a new window or another mysterious door in the castle—to the flat, plain, coloured illustrations nowadays beloved of publishers. Of course, if a quite little child can get the same amount of detail, combined with colour, as in the delightful picture books of Walter Crane, so much the greater is its joy. But by older children the coloured illustration is often considered babyish, unworthy the dignity of the sort of fairy-tale they love. Imagine "The Princess and the Goblin" with coloured pictures. Perish the thought! My memory goes back to its beautifully mysterious drawings and again the glamour of the fairy tale is upon me, and I envy the child for whom, out of a thousand books, a mother or an aunt has "chosen right."

NETTA SYRETT.

## Christmas Songs

THINGS which are trivial and even absurd are frequently known to call up tender and pleasant recollections and the best recollections of all centre around the family hearth at Christmastide. It is probably owing to this "homing instinct" that Christmas songs owe their preservation and their popularity. Not but what many of them are very beautiful in themselves and have an intense interest of their own. Still, the fact remains that carols, which are in their nature by no means peculiar to Christmas, have only been able to survive in connection with this one festive season of the year. Epiphany carols, Midsummer carols and all

the rest of them have gone and along with them have disappeared the "dances" which formerly accompanied them, and which were, indeed, essential features of the same. For a carol is in its essence nothing more than a "ring-dance," to which music and words would afterwards be added; it has nothing inherently sacred or Christian about it—on the contrary, secular and heathen thoughts abound. The May-pole ring-dance still survives in mutilated form and contrasts with the "country" or "counter" dance, a square dance like the Sir Roger de Coverley.

Of course, dancing has been used from time immemorial as a religious exercise and we may perhaps find a relic of the



old dance in the solemn "strut" or procession with which the boar's head is annually carried in at Queen's College, Oxford, to the accompaniment of that quaint old carol—

Caput apri defero  
Reddens laudes Domino.

A relic, it may be, of those simpler and more genial times when even a Provost or a Dean might have been dignified by, as they would certainly now lend dignity to, a dance.

The music might, at first, be just sufficient to give time and rhythm to the dance measure; the words would follow in the natural sequence of development.

For the full understanding of the carol, it is necessary to study it in connection with the Mystery and Miracle Plays which formed such an important feature of the Middle Ages. Here we can do no more than point out one very obvious fact, that the Clerkenwell Mysteries, for instance, endured for no less than eight days, and the Chester Mysteries for three, so that audiences must have welcomed with loud sighs of relief anything which was calculated to relieve the tedium of the performance; and songs and dances must have been used both as explanations of the scenes and as "entr'actes" to relieve the weariness.

The early connection between the Church and the carol is especially noticeable in that large number of "mixed carols," half in Latin and half in the vernacular, which has come down to us; the "mixed" form is quite as apparent in numbers of the student or drinking as in the religious songs, and the former read now as though they may have sometimes been intentional parodies of the sacred songs.

Of these last, the well-known instance is that of the beautiful fourteenth century Christmas song:—

In dulci jubilo,  
Let us our homage shew;  
Our heart's joy reclineth  
In praesepio!

Of the others, the following parody is found in an old collection of student songs:—

In dulci jubilo,  
We'll let our spirits flow,  
Our heart's joy reclineth  
Latet in poculo!

If we may use an humble illustration by way of making the argument clear, we would say that the flavour of Latin still hanging round the ancient carol somewhat resembles the little bits of eggshell which will often cling to a newly-hatched chicken, betraying the secret of its birth.

Then other very striking sets of carols have come down to us, one class of which contains and embodies a variety of extraordinary legends, chiefly, but not altogether, taken out of the Apocrypha, which have wound themselves round the wondrous story of Christ's birth. There is the Cherry Tree Carol, the underlying ideal of which Raphael has immortalised in the picture of the Madonna giving cherries to a child:—

Then bespoke Mary  
With words both meek and kind;  
"Pluck me some cherries, Joseph,  
They run so in my mind."

Then bow'd down the highest tree  
Unto God's Mother's hand:  
Then she cried, "See, Joseph,  
I have cherries at command."

This legend about the cherries seems to contain the kernel of the quaint belief that the birth of Christ was in some way or other connected with the disobedience of Eve in eating of the forbidden fruit.

Next, there is the still stranger carol of the "Carnal and the Crane," in which the well-informed crane instructs his catechumen, the crow, in matters pertaining to the birth and early days of Jesus, including the miracle of the roasted cock, which stood up upon the dish and crowed three times, or in other versions, exclaimed "Christus natus est."

One final word should be said upon a whole race of carols dedicated to one single aspect of Christmas. If there was one thing more than another which the birth of Christ effected, it was to give honour and dignity to Motherhood and Childhood. The sentiment of maternal love, as displayed by the Virgin for her Child, became the master-motive of the great Italian painters. A quite distinct and separate Infant-cult arose.

There is an early Latin cradle-song, which legend claims to be the actual lullabye sung by the Virgin Mary herself:—

Sleep, O son, sleep,  
Thy mother sings to her first-born;  
Sleep, O boy, sleep,  
Thy father cries out to his little child.  
Thousands of praises we sing to Thee,  
A thousand, thousand thousands.

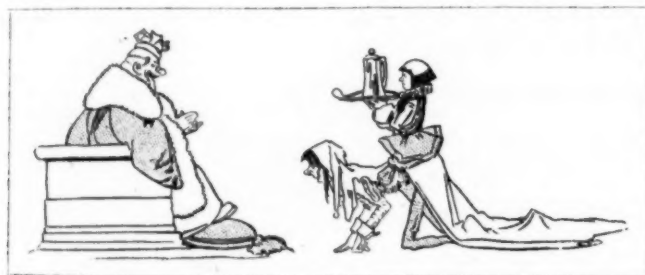
Here is a verse of another "Praesepio" carol, probably sung to the rocking of a cradle: it is a little German folk-lullabye, the music of which Wagner has introduced into his Siegfried Idyll:—

Sleep, Baby, sleep,  
The sky is full of sheep,  
The stars the lambs of heaven are,  
For whom the shepherd moon doth care,  
Sleep, Baby, sleep.

Here are surely glimpses of a pagan past, of a nature worship strangely confused with Christianity—not so very far removed from the frankly pagan "Baby, Baby bunting," which seems to carry us back to a time when Baby was clothed in skins and when Daddy was compelled by necessity to go a-hunting.

It is this many-sidedness of the carol which makes it so fascinating, this half-light and half-darkness, this mixture of Paganism and Christianity, of sacred and profane, of the true and the legendary, of mediæval mysticism and modern socialism. It has not only the brightness of sunrise but the rich after-glow of sunset as well. To study carols is to go to some many-coloured Border City, where two civilisations meet, the dreamy East and the nervous West; where on the one side the soft echoes of the past can be caught and on the other the brisk summons to a life and of action is heard.

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Illustration from "The Young Ice Whalers" (Longmans).

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## By Land

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Illustration from "The Disputed V.C." (Blackie).

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### Girls' Books

**T**HE modern girl, with her improved education and wider outlook, is surely worth writing for and about; yet hardly a novelist of the higher rank is willing—if able—to sketch girl-life of the present day for the delight of present-day girlhood. Scared away from the piles of crimson-and-gold the Christmas market spreads before them by their certainty that the gay covers harbour mere simple-minded and innocuous nonsense, our girls are carrying off to their chosen corners the tender fancies and dainty humours of Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen; or—in severer mood—are eschewing fiction altogether.

From the output of the present season it is not too easy to find morsels that may tempt the critical damsel's appetite. But here—in sober colouring quite in keeping with our seriously-minded maids—is a tale by Miss Adeline Sergeant, the curiously-unequal author of the "Story of a Penitent Soul." "Alison's Ordeal" (Nisbet, 5s.) is an effort in lighter vein from Miss Sergeant's pen, but the writing is terse and easy, and the Christmas-book girl will be grateful for a story which has sympathy and character. Touched here and there with a hint of modernity—as in the introduction of a Socialist brother and sister whose "views" are capable of modification under press of circumstance—this pleasant tale is none the less of the school of Miss Yonge in its essentials.—Mrs. L. T. Meade has chosen a familiar theme for her, "That Brilliant Peggy" (Hodder and Stoughton, 6s.). Peggy's brilliancy must be taken rather for granted by the young reader, who will learn in these pages how the selfish heroine stole her sister's old love, and flung him back to her more worthy senior when her own youthful adorer was well-nigh distracted. This tale is told in pleasant style.

"Sibyl; or, Old School Friends" (Chambers, 3s. 6d.), is a sequel by Miss May Baldwin to her story "A Popular Girl."



Illustration from "The Haunted Ship" (Melrose).

Book," by Paul Danby (Blackie, 6s.), embodies a good idea. It is just a simple account, in popular language, of the various branch of the service, full of good stories, coloured illustrations,



Miss Baldwin writes a graceful, attractive tale concerning the love affairs of several charming girls and generous swains, and is intent on contrasting the characters and fortunes of an English, American, and German trio. The book is quite up-to-date, each of the girls having a theory of life which excludes mawkish sentimentalism.—A historical period of which romancists never tire is revived in the story of "A Fair Jacobite" (Nelson, 2s. 6d.), in which Miss H. May Poynter writes with sufficient knowledge of the Court life of the "Chevalier" and his family in France. The fictitious characters are limned in a skilful manner, and young readers will find the fortunes of English Jacobites indicated with some novelty of incident.

A young medical woman of humble birth, and the lovely daughter of a well-to-do Irish baronet, are the twin heroines of Miss F. Craig Houston's nicely-written story, "The Woman of the Well" (R.T.S., 3s. 6d.). The friendship of the girls does not greatly affect the plot, which has a dramatic turn, and is helped forward by some good dialogue. Readers not repulsed by the ill-chosen title will like "The Woman of the Well."—"The Miller's Daughter," by Anne Beale (Griffith, Farran, 3s. 6d.), a bulky and brightly-clad volume, has more of masculine than of feminine interest. The reformation of the miller's smuggling son seems of more moment than is the love-story of his sister. This tale will please domestic girls.—Some quaint prettiness marks the boy-and-girl affection of hero and heroine in "A Puritan Knight-Errant," by Edith Robinson (Jarrold, 3s. 6d.), a New England story of a bygone day. This is an American product.—"Audrey Marsh," by Evelyn Everett Green (Collins, 1s.), a very short tale for grown-up girls, begins with a quarrel and ends with a wedding, in which two ordinary young people are concerned.—"The Madcaps," by the Rev. F. Langbridge (Routledge, 1s. 6d.), is an Irish story. A trio of lively girls set up housekeeping in the typically dilapidated "Castle" of an impoverished family; and the love-affair of one of them brings about a tragedy.

The wants of the home-keeping circle generally, rather than of girls in particular, are catered for by the many novelettes and tales issued by the Religious Societies. A couple of very prettily-bound volumes are "Annie Carr," by the author of "Adventures in the South Pacific," and "By Love Impelled," by Harriet Colville (R.T.S., 2s. 6d.). "Annie Carr" is a tale of early days in the New South Wales Colony, and has a convict-heroine whose undeserved sentence is finally revoked. A child's influence restores the faith and energy of a much-tried cleric who in "By Love Impelled" finds his widowed state almost unendurable. A sister's love-story is interwoven. These are both fairly interesting tales.—The R.T.S. issue also a smaller pair of tastefully-bound books (2s.). "The anchoress of Ste. Maxime," by M. H. Cornwall Legh, describes a daughter's devotion; and the ultimate cure, through awakened love, of her exacting mother. "A Princess in Calico" is an American story, and pictures a character of unalloyed saintliness.

"The Wrecker's Farm," by Elizabeth Mitchell (S.P.C.K., 2s.), has for theme the mischief wrought by a man's passionate temper. The forgiving qualities of wife and son may rouse sympathetic interest in homely hearts.—Similar in tone is "Granny's Brocade," by Helen Oxenborough (S.P.C.K., 2s.), in which the real heroine is a woman of middle age, whose prejudice warps her judgment, and makes her yield to unjust suspicion. The finding of a missing codicil in the hem of a brocade skirt works a swift reformation.—"The Mark of Cain," by Emily Finnemore (S.P.C.K., 2s. 6d.), tells the old story of a brother who commits murder in his heart. It is a vigorous and well-written tale.

Leaving the pile of love-stories and domestic novelettes, we turn to tales suitable for girls of fifteen or sixteen. At this age, our lassies love a school-story or a tale of adventure, and are impatient of sentiment. "The Children Who Ran Away," by Evelyn Sharp (Macmillan, 6s.), is a study of a fourteen-year-old whose healthy animal spirits and love of out-door life run counter to a habit of self-introspection. Prue flies with her little brother from the home where they are "not wanted," to the care of an eccentric but benevolent young lady who makes it her business to understand misunderstood children. Prue is of a type with which girls in general are not always in sympathy; but her story is told in a bright, distinctive way by the author.—Mrs. L. T. Meade's pen is bright as ever in "A Gay Charmer" (Chambers, 5s.), though the staccato style of dialogue becomes fatiguing to the reader. It is the story of a prim little maid's jealousy of a fascinating cousin, whose high spirits and charm of manner conquer her sober uncle and aunt and render them critical of their own child's dulness. The means taken by prim Julia to revenge her wrongs are of a most drastic nature and not quite credible.—"The Manor School," by the same writer (Chambers, 6s.), shows the same defect in dialogue, but has a more interesting subject. The heroine, aged thirteen, begins by running away to try slum-life, but repents

quickly and returns home. Sent off to school, she finds that the tale of her misdeeds follows her, and leads her to plenty of woe, whence she emerges a pattern heroine.

From America and the Colonies come some engaging stories of girl-life seen in novel aspect. A true human note is always



Illustration from "Girls Together" (Melrose).

sounded in the Australian tales of Miss Ethel Turner; whose books, moreover, owe a good deal of their variety and deeper interest to the pains bestowed on adult characters—which, in most stories for boys and girls, are mere lay figures or conventional types of "parent and guardian." Miss Turner's new book, "Betty and Co." (Ward, Lock, 3s. 6d.), is a collection of stories. In the longest, Betty, a brave little cripple of thirteen, tries to help her widowed mother by starting a dolly-clothes and furniture establishment on an original plan. The patronage of kindly friends makes the venture a success. The simple naturalness of these tales is a quality our home-writers might imitate with advantage. It is to be found in two books, also of Australian origin, by Louise Mack (Melrose, 3s. 6d.). "Teens" may be remembered as a most fresh and pleasing narrative of school-girl life in Sydney. In "Girls Together," the sequel, the same characters are introduced, and one has a love-story. Brightly written, and devoid of silly sentiment, this tale is likely to win favour.—More precious and "pronounced" in tone are the schoolgirls in "Little Miss Sunshine," by Gabrielle Jackson (Jarrold, 3s. 6d.); but there is a certain novelty in the experiences of the true-hearted, unselfish heroine. Her friendships and frolics make up an attractive story for those who do not object to American diction.

"The Oak Staircase" (Griffith, Farran, 3s. 6d.), a tale of the Monmouth Rebellion, and especially of the Maids of Taunton, is written by M. and C. Lee in a way to make history readable. It will be liked by thoughtful and intelligent young girls.—"A Heroine of the Sea," [by Bessie Marchant (Blackie, 3s. 6d.), is a



vivid and picturesque story of life on the coast of north-east America. It is that rare thing, a genuine tale of adventure for girls; and girls will thoroughly enjoy it. The incidents are entirely fresh, the dialogue and characterization are good, and the author as a story-teller has an obvious and distinctive gift. This is one of the best of the season's books.—"Niece Diana," by Marion Ward (Isbister, 2s. 6d.), is a conventional tale of a tomboy of sixteen. Diana's prankish ways win her uncle from his reclusive habits, but are less potent with a prim aunt.

For younger girls, Dr. Gordon Stables has written the lively little story of "Young Peggy McQueen" (Collins, 1s.). Peggy is the chief attraction of a caravan troupe called "The Wandering Minstrels," who, after straying about England, set out for Australia and are shipwrecked *en route*. The story then takes a new turn on a remote island, and Peggy fascinates the Cannibal King. The author's cheery style is well known to girls.—"Daddy's Lad," by E. L. Haverfield (Nelson, 1s. 6d.), is a prettily-written tale for children. The little heroine, an only and well-loved child, is sure her father must long for a son, and sets herself to supply the vacancy by the introduction of a neglected waif. He, of course, turns out to be the missing heir.

Two tales of strongly religious bias, suitable for "Sunday reading," are sent out by Nelson and Sons, with pretty bindings and coloured pictures. "Isabel's Secret" (2s.), by the author of "The Story of a Happy Little Girl," is a tale of home-life, in which every incident is used to enforce some Biblical lesson.—Very sad in subject and tone is "On Angels' Wings" (1s. 6d.), by the Hon. Mrs. Greene. The scene is laid in Germany, and an invalid child is the heroine.

The S.P.C.K. issue two little books for young girls of the working-class. "An Old-Fashioned Servant" (1s.), by Beatrice Radford, tells, with plenty of incident, the history of a faithful domestic whose service was appreciated by her fortunate employers. "Bringing Home the May," by Phoebe Allen (6d.), finds in a well-known country superstition a peg whereon to hang a simple story of rustic life.

Each volume of those named in the present article is sent out with a frontispiece, or several illustrations, by some artist of more or less capability; but in the majority of cases, the pictures do not greatly help the text. A little more care on the part of the illustrators might reasonably be demanded by long-suffering writers.

### General

**A LITTLE BROTHER TO THE BEAR.** By William J. Long. (Ginn, 7s. 6d.) All lovers of nature owe a debt of gratitude to the earnest and kindly student of the woods who gives us this present volume. We are not surprised to learn that the observations embodied in this charming book cover a period of thirty years; the average man in three times thirty would never get beyond the common-places of animal life. It is only when one reads such a book as Mr. Long's that one realises how little one knows about the habits and lives of animals, and how very many interesting facts there are to learn. Many pages in this book read almost like a fairy story, so strange and undreamt of are the lives of the wood folk. To the dweller in towns, the wood where the Little Brothers to the Bear, Mooweesuk, the coons, frolic and play, seems almost like enchanted scenes out of a fairy story. But no, this is what the children love—a true story. "A Little Brother to the Bear" is not a text-book of the general habits of animals, such as many naturalists can write. "I have passed over a hundred animals or birds to watch one, and have recorded only the rare observations, such as are seldom seen, and then only by men who spend long days and seasons in the woods in silent watchfulness." Little Brother to the Bear lived in the rocks in the heart of the big still woods. An Indian child discovered his home. "I peeked, one day, an' I theen hith eyeth wink; an', an', an' then I ran away." At twilight appears the face of the coon, "a keen face, yet very innocent, in which dog intelligence and fox cunning and bear drollery mingled perfectly." He is an adept angler playing with his whiskers on the surface of the water. The chapter about K'dunk, the fat grey toad, who would come in answer to a whistle, and had a fondness for music but disliked "ragtime" tunes, is altogether delightful. However, the whole book is full of fascination and will prove a delight to young and old.

### Fairy Tales and Others

**F**ROM the kitchen at Christmas time comes forth the work of cook's hands, the Christmas puddings and the mince pies, and out of the booksellers' shops, by the hands of Santa Claus, come the fairy tales. What is the recipe for a fairy story? What are the ingredients? Are they not somewhat like this, remembering, of course, that every cook, that is, fairy maker, has his or her own particular idea of the mixing or seasoning: Take a beautiful and virtuous damsel in distress, a handsome prince, an ugly wicked sister (an unnatural mother will do), and last, but very important, a fairy godmother, or her equivalent. Mix all together, having due regard to the proportions, with plenty of adventure, and sweeten with a little love. The result will be a more or less successful fairy tale, according to the mixing. The touch should be light and imaginative or the story will be heavy. Not every cook can make a light pudding, and equally not every writer can produce a fairy tale with just the right admixture of fancy and realism.

Before me lies a goodly pile of such fairy tales, ready to be devoured by the eager little ones. Many of the story providers are old and tried favourites, such as Mr. Andrew Lang. This year he has given us "The Crimson Fairy Book" (Longmans, 6s.), delightful outside and in. The crimson and gold cover, with its picture of a valiant knight with his foot on the neck of a terrible monster, fairies flying around, will bring pleasurable anticipations to any child. Inside there are eight beautiful coloured plates, a triumph alike for artist and printer. Mr. Lang again relieves his conscience by telling his young readers—do children ever read prefaces?—that the tales are adapted from those told in many far-away climes, from Hungary, Serbia, Finland, Iceland, and many other places to be found on the map. But then maps are put away at Christmas time. Who would wait to look at a map when one can start on the story of "Lovely Ilonka"? The book is crowded with capital stories charmingly illustrated, and no child could desire anything better.

"The Japanese Fairy Book," by Yei Theodora Ozaki (Constable, 6s. net), is the outcome of a suggestion made indirectly to the compiler by Mr. Andrew Lang. Children will again be grateful to Mr. Lang for this quaint and charming collection of stories. A mere glance at the many excellent illustrations arouses one's interest, with the Japanese garments and strange looking beasts and dragons. Urashima Taro, the fisher lad, out of his kindness of heart rescues a tortoise from some mischievous boys, for Japanese boys are mischievous as well as English boys, it seems. The next day the tortoise calls to him from the sea, and asks him if he would like to go to Rin Gin, the Palace of the Dragon King of the Sea. Thither the Fisher Lad rides on the back of the tortoise, and sees many strange things. But when, after what seems a few days sojourning there, he returns to his own home, he finds that he has been away for three hundred years, and his name is only a memory. "The Mirror of Matsuyama" is a particularly charming story, and is concerned with the giving of a mirror by a husband to his wife, which is at her death handed down to their daughter. "As the sword is the soul of a Samurai, so is the mirror the soul of a woman."

Miss Netta Syrett is represented by two volumes, one a volume of children's fairy plays, entitled "Six Fairy Plays for Children" (Lane, 2s. 6d. net), and the other called "The Magic City" (Lawrence and Bullen, 3s. 6d.). The first four stories which give the name to the latter volume are based on the pretty and original idea of taking four London names, Lavender Hill, Child's Hill, Paternoster Row and Tokenhouse Yard, weaving a fairy story around each. The map of London becomes enchanted ground. These delightful stories can be recommended to any perplexed uncle or aunt in search of a Christmas gift.

"The One Strand River," by Mrs. H. F. Hall (Nutt, 6s.), is another volume that may be heartily recommended to the notice of Santa Claus. The stories are told with commendable simplicity, together with a crisp bright touch that lifts them far above mediocrity. The illustrations by H. R. Millar are full of grace and fancy.

"The City of Quest," by Dora Greenwell McChesney and L. Studdiford McChesney (Dent, 4s. 6d.), is replete with colour and poetry, but we do not think it will find so much favour with children as the more simple and direct fairy tale. In a word, it is a little above children's full comprehension, it is almost a story for their elders, if they have not outgrown their love of magic.

A modest little volume entitled "The Land of Nod," by Jean Roberts (S.P.C.K., 1s. 6d.), does not give any idea of the delights within. The seven stories are full of rare humour and originality. The tale which gives the name to the volume is one of the best, where all are good. Phil's excursion to the land of Nod on a

personally conducted tour by a Merry Thought, dressed in a ruff and sugar-loaf hat, is a pretty piece of fun.

"King Clo," by Harry A. James (Newnes, 2s. 6d. net), is the story of a king who was nicknamed "Clo" because his one idea in life was the replenishing of his handsome wardrobe. He did not propose to the Princess until he had spent some months in preparing a suitable costume for the occasion.

"Grimm's Fairy Tales," selected and edited for little folk, comes to us from Messrs. Blackie (3s. 6d.), printed in large clear type and with numerous illustrations, many of them brightly coloured, by Helen Stratton.

To those who like to combine a modicum of instruction with amusement, we can recommend "Greek Story and Song," by Professor Alfred J. Church, M.A. (Seeley, 5s.), "Stories from the Latin Poets," by M. R. Pease, and "Children of Odiŭ," by E. E. Speight, B.A. (Marshall, 1s. each). The stories are simply told in carefully chosen language. Stories of the old gods are always fascinating to children.

The "Big Book of Nursery Rhymes" (edited by Walter Jerrold, illustrated by Charles Robinson; Blackie, 7s. 6d.) contains familiar homely rhymes in a beautiful setting! It is indeed a big book, handsome inside and out. The rhymes are the same as we heard in the nursery, the story of Simple Simon, the adventures of Little Bo-Peep, the wooing of the Frog, but the illustrations are more delightful than anything we could ever imagine. The illustrator has drawn the pictures with rare humour and charm. There are all sorts of verses, game rhymes, historical pieces, folk-lore, counting-out rhymes, in fact, every sort of fragment that we call a nursery rhyme. Some of the longer rhymes have been considerably cut, as for instance in the case of "Jack Horner," of which only one verse is now generally used. The recipient of such a gift as "The Big Book of Nursery Rhymes" is a person to be congratulated. It is a book that will never grow stale or dull with age, and is sure still to be a favourite when more exciting books of adventure begin to pall. The editor and illustrator alike are entitled to hearty praise for this admirable gift book.

"Wilhelm's Fortune," by E. Simonet Thompson (Drake, 3s. 6d.). A nicely bound, tasteful volume, containing three brightly-written fairy stories. Wilhelm's fortune is made by means of the magic hammer which he finds in Old Lisbeth's Cottage.

"Nobody's Baby," by Tom Gallon (Eveleigh Nash). Here we have an Enchanted Castle and a Princess, a Giant and the Fairy Prince. The Princess's name is Prudence, and she is left alone in the world when only a year old. Old Mother Grogarty tires after a few years of keeping her in the hope of a reward, and loses her in the driving snow and wind of a December night. Providentially near at hand is the Enchanted Castle, where after many exciting adventures she finds a welcome and a home. A pretty story, prettily illustrated by Gordon Browne.

The difficulty is not to find a suitable book for a Christmas present, but out of the abundance to choose. Santa Claus must have more difficulty in this respect every year.

## Picture Books

TRULY of the making of children's books there is no end. Every year the output seems larger than ever, and this season's "crop" will bear comparison in sumptuousness of get-up, gorgeousness of colour, and variety of subject

with that of any previous year. It remains true, however, that few of the writers and illustrators of so-called children's books are able to produce the real genuine article—a book which is suited to children, appreciated by children, and written or drawn for children. Too many of the present-day books for a child, though clever and attractive in themselves, are either far above the heads of the readers to whom they are supposed to appeal, or else, what is much worse, obviously "written down" to the child's level. The average youthful reader detects this at once and very justly resents it.

Three excellent picture books for very little people are "The Doll's House" (6d.), "Our Dogs" (1s.), and "The Book of Horses" (1s.) (Nelson), while the same firm issues "Silver Bubbles" (2s. 6d.), which appeals, successfully, to somewhat older children.

"Nature's Painting Book" (Dean) would be better if the objects to be painted were more correctly drawn and coloured; but "Some Old Nursery Friends, pictured by John Hassall" (same publishers), will be a joy to many a youthful heart.

"The Wonderful Castle," by Mary E. Murray (Melrose,

net 1s.), is old-fashioned in every way and is not necessarily at a disadvantage for that reason.—But we cannot think that any child, however modern, will derive much pleasure from "The Sad End of Erica's Blackamoor," by F. Claude Kempson (Arnold, 3s. 6d.), as here the elaboration is excessive and overdone.

From Messrs. Warne come "Johnny Crow's Garden," drawn by L. Leslie Brooke (2s. 6d. net), which is all that a child's book ought to be; "British History" (2s. 6d. net), and "The Wide World Painting Book" (2s. 6d. net), excellent examples of "the gilded pill"; "The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin," by Beatrix Potter (1s. net), which is hardly so successful as "The History of Peter Rabbit," by the same author, and "What is This? An Object-book for Children," intended for the younger generation. "Nobody Knows," illustrated by Madeline Hall (2s. net, same publishers), is prettily got up.

One of the best illustrated books is "Did You Ever?" by Lewis Baumer (Chambers, 6s.), the pictures are exceedingly clever and the verses very funny.—"Children of the Village," by Maud Beddington (Dent, 5s. net), is hardly suitable for children; and the same remark applies to "Sparks from the Nursery Fire," by Sheila Braine and M. Watson (Westminster Press).

"Stories for You," by Mona Swete (Griffith, Farran, 3s. 6d.), is not very attractive; but hearty praise may be accorded to "the Animal Game Book," by Harry Rountree (Allen, 3s. 6d.), the drawings in which are immensely clever.

"Lords and Ladies" and "I've Seen the Sea" (Brimley Johnson, 1s. 6d. each), by A. and S. Sharpley, are pretty little books; and



Illustration from "The Crimson Fairy Book" (Longmans).



"The Romance of a Boo-bird Chick," by Phyllis M. Gotch (same publisher, 1s. 6d.), is clever but rather too "old."

A number of volumes of varying merit come from Messrs. Blackie; among the best are "How They Went to School," by S. Rosamond Praeger, (2s. 6d.); "My Book of True Stories" (2s.), with really charming pictures; "A Picture-book of Animals" (2s.) and "The Animals' Academy" (3s. 6d.), pictured by Harry B. Neilson, who is well known for his humorous drawings of animals. "Hill Babies," by Lisbeth Bergh (3s. 6d.), is not so successful.

Mr. Neilson is also responsible for the illustrations to "Amazing Adventures" (Skeffington, 5s.), the text of which is supplied by the Rev. S. Baring Gould. The language is rather difficult and the drawings not always so good as Mr. Neilson's best. "Turvy-Topsy," by W. Gunn Gwennat (same publishers, 3s. 6d.), is undoubtedly highly coloured.

"Toby and his Little Dog Tan," by Gilbert James, illustrated by Charles Pears (Hodder and Stoughton, 6s.), is an excellent tale, and if the drawings are a little too clever for children they are, at least, attractive to "grown-ups."

In "Pickaback Songs," by Myrtle Reed, Eva Cruzen Hart and I. Morgan (Putnam, 6s.), there is provided a really excellent book for those young people who are fond of music; the tunes are simple and catching, the verses good, and the illustrations excellent; the whole volume is beautifully produced.

"The Dawn of Day" (S.P.C.K., 1s. 4d.) is the annual volume of the monthly magazine of that name, and provides much Sunday reading of an old-fashioned type.

A most attractive and beautifully printed volume is "Children of the Arctic," by the Snow Baby and her Mother (Isbister, 6s.), giving the experiences of little Miss Peary.

Belonging to a different category, in that it is about children rather than for them, is Miss Constance Maud's "The Rising Generation" (Smith, Elder, 6s.). Miss Maud has evidently studied the workings of the youthful mind very carefully, and is able to appreciate the point of view from which the rising generation looks upon its elders. The sketches are most sympathetic and lead one to hope that the "grown-ups" are at least beginning to look at young people in the proper light. If they could but do this they would avoid a good deal of misunderstanding and consequent unhappiness.

"Quackles, Junior," by S. H. Hamer, illustrated by Harry Rountree (Cassell), is a story of the extraordinary adventures of a duckling. Anybody would lose their heart to the beautiful duckling who figures on the cover, with a red umbrella under his arm, attired in his own fluffy yellow feathers and a bewitching smile. He has many adventures. On the road to market he falls out of the cart and is left all alone on a dusty road, seeing his brothers and sisters fast disappearing. But Croaker, a handsome young frog, comes to his rescue and escorts him to "Jungle Wood," where any animal or bird who has escaped from Man's clutches is welcome. There we see Quackles in the hospital, being fanned by Croaker with a leaf and watched over by Nurse Hare. Mr. Hamer's amusing books are already so well known that they need no recommendation. The illustrations are capital, nothing could be more amusing than the picture of the old fat sow jumping from a burning house. Could not Messrs. Cassell provide the second edition with a cloth binding, worthy of so good a book?

## Books for Wee Bairns

**S**ANTA CLAUS is beginning to take even tiny children somewhat seriously, for he has persuaded some publishers that the familiar toy-book, with its gorgeous colour-scheme, is played out. Well, we believe the beneficent patron-saint of the suspended stocking is mistaken. However that may be, here we have a set of small volumes actually called "The Little Ones' Library" (Hodder and Stoughton, 1s. 6d. each). They comprise such books as "The Little Ones' Life of Christ" and "The Little Ones' Hans Andersen," by Alton Towers, with illustrations by Audrey J. Watson; "Greedy Dick and Other Stories in Verse," by Ann and Jane Taylor, with pictures by Edmund Smyth; "The New House that Jack Built," by Ralph Somerville, illustrated by Percy J. Billingham, and "Uncle Jock's New Nursery Rhymes." The pictures are in colour.—Of more decided merit and individuality are "The Rubbish Alphabet," by Gerald Sichel, and "Crude Ditties: a Collection of Limericks," by S. C. Woodhouse, with illustrations by Augustine J. Macgregor (Swan Sonnenschein, 1s. each). Mr. Woodhouse's opusculum is clever, but far over the heads of children.—"Little Deeghie-Head: an Awful Warning to Bad Babas" (Nisbet, 1s. 6d.), shows, too

realistically for tiny tots, the terrible fate of a disobedient baby; and Ann Batchelor essays, not unsuccessfully, a fresh pictorial rendering of "Old Nursery Rhymes" (same publisher).—In "Tom Catapus and Potiphar" (Warne, 1s. 6d.) Miss Lily Schofield relates a tale of ancient Egypt, full of local colour, artistically and well produced.—Although the character and quality of "Little English Poems" (Horace Marshall, 1s. 6d.) are unequal, Miss Lettice Thomson's selection is likely to please her youthful clients, despite the difficulty of a few of the pieces. But she is not justified in adapting, even slightly, American and other extracts to meet the needs of English children.—"Scroodles and the Others" (Skeffington, 2s. 6d.), by Mrs. Barré Goldie, deals with the experiences of a young girl who has gone to pay her first visit to the family of her fiancé—a curious theme for a children's book. We seem to have met all the characters before.—Mr. Warren Killingworth in "Merry Jack" (Jarrold, 3s. 6d.) relates, and Miss Dora Sulman illustrates, the doings of a monkey from the day it left its native forest until it became the chained chum of an organ-grinder.—"Pussy Meow: the Autobiography of a Cat" (Meirose, 2s. 6d.), by S. Louise Patteson, might have been better had it been half the length. It is almost dull.—"Mother Goose's Rhymes" (Dent, 5s.), with 23 coloured plates and many black and white pictures in the text by Mabel Chadburn, is the best and completest collection of universal favourites we know of. The bairns will greet it gladly, and no nursery should be without it.

## For those Entering their Teens.

The Lewis Carroll tradition of nonsense stories is being capably carried on by Mr. G. E. Farrow, whose "Professor Philanderpan" (Pearson, 5s.), with 54 excellent illustrations by Alan Wright, is quite equal to his previous work. This story takes the reader to the Land of Myths, where it is the mission of the Professor to unteach the proverbs which his amiable lady has already succeeded in unproving. The course of adventure leads us to the Enchanted Island, where we meet with all sorts of creatures from the Sea Serpent to the Albatross and Minerva. Another volume of the same kidney is Francis Russell Burrow's "Alexander in the Ark" (Pearson, 5s.), with appropriate pictures by Edith Hope. Sandy's adventures are set forth with unflagging vivacity.—"The Golden Stair," by David Bearn, S.J. (Burns and Oates, 3s. 6d.), with pleasing pictures by Mr. T. Baines, presents us with a strange mixture—close observation of Nature in each month of the year, with special reference to the greater religious festivals; a study of boy life at Havenhurst, with a liberal infusion of Roman Catholic sentiment and dogma. The poems show that Father Bearn owns a true gift of song.—We cannot compliment Mr. G. E. Mitton upon "The Children's Book of London" (A. and C. Black, 6s.). It is a splendid subject spoiled by verbosity. The book is divided into three parts: (1) London as it is; (2) Historical stories (the chapter on Charles I. is crude); and (3) The sights of London. The twelve plates after Mr. John Williamson (although we regret the choice of the "Murder of the Little Princes") have been beautifully reproduced by the three-colour process, and, indeed, the publishers have spared no pains to make the volume an ideal gift-book. Mr. Mitton was joint author with Sir Walter Besant of "The Fascination of London" series. It is a pity that the fascination appears to have evaporated.

## Annuals

"Mr. Punch's New Book for Children," edited and illustrated by Charles Pears ("Punch" Office, 6s.), is—necessarily—full of good things, drawn and told. The pictures are miles better than those of the average Christmas child's book, and the stories excellent of their kind. The Gollywog and the Railway Guard, and Mabel's dream of the gentleman who sprouted a long red nose "very nearly as long as himself" are delicious. Miss Edith Farmiloe gives us this year "One Day" (Richards, 6s.), which is just the simple little autobiography of Peter, aged six. He has a birthday, gets lots of presents, goes shopping in Sloane Street, listens to "Mummy's" stories, and has a party, all in one day. Lucky Peter! The pictures have that quaint, fairy unworldliness with which Miss Farmiloe has made us familiar. They are dream-children; but the children of very pleasant dreams.

—ST. NICHOLAS. Volume XXX. (Macmillan, 8s. 6d.) A treasure store of stories, poems, and illustrations for girls and boys. There is ample amusement, as well as pleasant instruction, in its pages, and no more delightful gift could be petitioned from Santa Claus. The illustrations are altogether admirable.

[See also page 648.]



## Cross and Sword

MEN OF THE COVENANT. THE STORY OF THE SCOTTISH CHURCH IN THE YEARS OF THE PERSECUTION. By Alexander Smellie, M.A. (Melrose. 7s. 6d.)

MR. SMELLIE asks us to condone the avowed Whiggishness of his book on the ground that "the Covenanter in the main was incontestably right," although, he adds, "I hope that I have never been conspicuously unfair to his opponent." The Whiggism is continuously obvious; and the unfairness is not seldom apparent. On page 161, for instance, he speaks of the original of Scott's Dugald Dalgetty, Sir James Turner, as the author of the Pentland Rising and its attendant wretchedness. Yet on an earlier page (132) he tells how the real originators of the Rising, after they had deformed some of Sir James's troopers, determined to continue in arms, and captured one or two little groups of soldiers, as well as the leader, "who was unwell and in bed." "King Charles's officer rode out of Dumfries their thrall." This is how Turner was "the author of the Pentland Rising." Mr. Smellie quotes Professor Hume Brown in praise of Argyle's statesmanship, but does not continue the quotation of the sentence, which says, "but by the part he played in the controversy between Protesters and Resolutions he had forfeited the respect of both." In such a book one need not look for magnanimity towards Claverhouse: here he gets scant justice. The "dramatic fitness" of part of John Graham's story stirs Mr. Smellie's scepticism; but if that were to form a criterion the melodramatic fitness of the doings of the Covenanters, as told in these pages, would stir in us positive unbelief. Surely the author might have tried to see Charles through the spectacles of Mr. Hume Brown, no unsympathetic critic of the Covenanters, and one with whose books he is quite well acquainted. The biographer of Knox relegates to a footnote the stories of John Brown's death related by Patrick Walker and Wodrow, accepting the straightforward statement of Claverhouse himself, which is practically the reverse process from Mr. Smellie's, as is his general estimate of Claverhouse's character. Believing with Burns that—

"The Solemn League and Covenant  
Now brings a smile, now brings a tear;  
But Sacred Freedom, too, was theirs,"

we cannot but think that Mr. Smellie has only succeeded in weakening a strong case and an otherwise excellent book by the fervour alike of his eulogies and his condemnations. A reproduction of Lely's drawing of Lauderdale makes an excellent frontispiece; but the portraits throughout the book, by another and unrelated Mr. Smellie, are very unequal in value.

THE Art Union of London are giving their subscribers excellent value in the capital etching by Mr. C. O. Murray, R.P.E., of Mr. Stanhope Forbes' "Good-bye! Off to Skibbereen," of which the painter is fully justified in saying, "Mr. Murray has managed to give a perfectly faithful reproduction of my work without sacrificing the individuality of his own style of method."

## "Academy" Questions &amp; Answers

Questions and Answers for this column must be addressed to THE EDITOR, THE ACADEMY AND LITERATURE, 43, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. It will be helpful if the envelope be marked in the top left-hand corner "A.Q.A." Full name and address must be sent, not necessarily for publication. Each Question or Answer must be written on a separate sheet of paper and on only one side of the paper. The Editor will not undertake the forwarding of any correspondence. Questions must be confined to matters of Literature, History, Archaeology, Folk-lore, Art, Music and the Drama. The Editor reserves the right of deciding

whether or not any Question or Answer is of sufficient interest to be published.

## Questions

## LITERATURE

CHATEAUBRIAND AND CAMDEN COLLECTIONS.—In his "Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe," Chateaubriand mentions having translated, for a society of antiquarians at Beccles, some old French manuscripts from the Camden Collections, relating to the early history of the county of Suffolk. Where can I learn what manuscripts they may have been and how, if belonging to the Camden Collections, they came to Beccles? Is it possible to trace any of the hack work (translations) which the same author did for certain London publishers in the earlier days of his exile (1793-4)? If so, where must I look for the things?—E. D.

DANTE AND HANS BREITMANN.—

Knows't thou the burning lay of Dante's own,  
Nix mangiare è il diavolo!  
Ma peggior la donna? &c.

from "A Californian Romance" in "Brand New Ballads." Is this really a quotation from the works of Dante?—Quill.

EDINBURGH LOGIC CLASS MOTTO.—"On Earth there is nothing great but Man; in Man there is nothing great but Mind!" Wanted, the Greek original.—Rothsay Reader.

Can anyone tell me some of the best works dealing with—

1. The Renaissance,
2. The Reformation?—W. B. L.

QUOTATION WANTED.—

What is the title of the poem by William Morris with the refrain—  
"Three red roses across the moon"—

and in which volume is it contained?—C. S.

## ART

THE "GENTLE SAVAGE."—In Mr. Austin Dobson's quite recent "Fanny Burney" there is a reference to the Otahetan, Omii—the Society Islander. A footnote says: "He was painted by Reynolds." Is this portrait of Cowper's "gentle savage" extant? If so, in whose possession?—B. B.

## Answers

## LITERATURE

"EINST, O WUNDER."—These words are taken from the second part of Matthäson's song "Adelaide," set to music by Beethoven. The opening words of this song are "Einsam wandelst dein Freund im Frühlingsgarten." The second part, quoted in the question, begins: "Einst, o Wunder! entblüht auf meinen Grabe eine Blume der Asche meines Herzens."—W. B. L.

"EINST, O WUNDER," asked for by M. A. S. in the current ACADEMY, form the last verse of Beethoven's famous song "Adelaide." I think M. A. S. would have no difficulty in getting a copy at any music-seller's if this, the proper title, were given. I did not know the song was mentioned in any of Stevenson's books, but it was evidently a great favourite of his, for in one of his letters he speaks of it as being the most perfect love-song ever written—ideal words wedded to ideal music. I forget the exact words, but the passage is a poetical and impressive one. It occurs in the first volume of the letters, and was, I think, written to his friend, Mrs. Ida Sitwell. The song is written for a man's voice. The author of the words I do not know.—Engländerin.

"PRETTY FANNY'S WAY."—I have always thought this was Pope's, and referred to "Lord Fanny," but suppose I must be mistaken, as a careful search through my copy of Pope has failed to discover it. Pope's Lord Fanny was John, Lord Hervey, a favourite of Queen Caroline and enemy of Pope, who ridiculed him in the Prologue to the Satires under the name of "sporus."—Index.

"PRETTY FANNY'S WAY."—See Thomas Parnell's "An Elegy to an Old Beauty" for—

"We call it only Pretty Fanny's way."

Other readers would appear to have in mind—

"Lord Fanny spins a thousand such a day."—

Pope's "Satires."—E. L.

"THE FIVE NATIONS."—I don't think "The Young Queen" (the only poem in Kipling's recent volume in which "The Five Nations" are explicitly alluded to) lends itself to H. C. F.'s definition. In this connection, are there five stars in the Southern Cross?—E. G.

QUOTATIONS FOUND.—

"Faint heart ne'er won fair lady."—

W. King, "Orpheus," line 133.

"Faint heart faire lady ne'er could win."—

Phineas Fletcher, "Brittain's Ida," Can. v., st. 1.

"And let us mind faint heart ne'er was a lady fair."—

Burns "To Dr. Blacklock."—Hastings Shaddick.

## GENERAL

PARIS COMMUNE.—The best history of the Paris Commune of 1871 is that by Thomas March, published by Swan Sonnenschein, in 1896.—W. B. L.

"KU KLUX KLAN."—This was a society formed after the War of Secession, in the Southern States of the Union, and had for its object the subjection of the negro race, to whom the Federal Government had given much power. Mutilation and assassination were its methods. The society flourished for about a dozen years. Perhaps Mr. Cutcliffe Hyne could oblige with the information he has on this subject, seeing that the hero of his recent book "Thompson's Progress" has thrilling adventures among them.—W. B. L.

"POLLY."—This is one of a class of names beginning with M. which change to P, e.g. Margaret, Maggy, Peggy; Martha, Matty, Patty. Similarly the change of r into ll may be found in the names Sarah, Sally, Dora, Dolly, Harry, Hal.—W. B. L.

"LEAVING IN THE LURCH."—I have no authority for what follows. Being fond of derivation I merely venture it. It is obvious that the use in cribbage is a secondary use, that is, one derived from an already established use. For the primary use (till one previous to it turns up) I take the word "lurcher"—a dog. I understand him to be a dog who has the gift of quick turning, as in following a hare. He is left in the lurch (or at the moment of the turn) if the hare turns so quickly that he runs a long way on and loses the hare. The countryman accustomed to hares soon applies this to his cribbage; if the game is very one-sided, the weaker men is left where the cribbage board takes its abrupt turn, i.e., half way through. As to the word "lurch" (assuming it to mean "turn") I merely recall that, French "loucher" is to squint—the meaning of "turn" is akin to this. The French may have crept in in English pronunciation. This is a mere suggestion, but I make little doubt the cursing meaning is antecedent to the cribbage one.—C. S. O.

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